

## **Block Grant Provides Essential Trauma Response Trainings in South Carolina**

### ***Issue***

More than 1,000 people were killed, and 50,144 were injured in traffic on S.C. roads in 2006. Almost half (442) of those fatalities and 19,185 of the injuries occurred on secondary and county roads.

Emergency medical services (EMS) response in these secondary route crashes is largely the responsibility of volunteer rescue squads or rural county EMS services. While the EMS services in these rural areas are required to meet state regulatory requirements for equipment and training, many of them do not have the resources that larger urban counties have. Additionally, many of these rural EMS services have lengthy travel times to the nearest trauma center.

### ***Intervention***

The assurance of a competent workforce is a central theme of the Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant (PHHSBG). Thanks to the funds of \$179,000 given to the S.C. Department Health and Environmental Control's Division of EMS and Trauma, the program has enhanced the capabilities of rural EMS providers by providing specific training to manage patients with critical traumatic injuries. Training provided during the 2008 PHHSBG year included:

- Two automobile and bus extrication courses in York County;
- Three pre-hospital Trauma Life Support courses in Greenville County;
- An Advanced Medical Life Support course in Greenville County;
- A Paramedic Course in Anderson County;
- Two International Trauma Life Support courses in Williamsburg County; and
- An Intermediate-Emergency Medical Technician course in Sumter County.

### ***Impact***

A total of 264 students statewide attended these and other trauma related courses throughout the year.

Steven Scurry, Director of Lee County EMS, a rural service that has very long run times to the nearest trauma center, feels that the investment in training for his personnel is wise. He said, "Given the limited resources we have in a poor, rural county---largely a measure of our tax base, we put a premium on training that addresses issues important to us such as highway trauma on farm to market roads and accidents related to farming activities." Mr. Scurry recently responded to a patient with severe head trauma, the result of an automobile crash. "The patient went into cardiac arrest at the scene, and we were able to successfully resuscitate him. Because of the trauma training that I and my partners had, we were able to provide him with a greater chance at survival."

**Contact:** Jim Catoe, Deputy Director, Division of EMS and Trauma  
S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control  
2600 Bull St. Columbia, S.C. 29201 (803) 545-4258,  
[CATOEJC@dhec.sc.gov](mailto:CATOEJC@dhec.sc.gov)